

## **E. UTAH WIC FOOD INSTRUMENT SYSTEM**

### **Overview**

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**Introduction** The voucher (Food Instrument) system is the method by which the Utah WIC Program issues food instruments to participants, the WIC clients redeems the food instrument for approved WIC food items, and food instruments are reconciled or resolved so that each food instrument is accounted for. The clinic must document all appropriate reconciliation requirements in accordance with this section.

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## **E.1. Description of Computer Food Instruments**

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### **Computer Generated Food Instruments**

1. The Utah WIC Program has utilizes computer food instruments which are generated and issued at the clinic site.
  2. Computer food instruments printed by the clinic contain the individual WIC participant ID number, name of participant, food package number, clinic number, First Day to Use, Last Day to Use, Not to Exceed Limit amount, quantity and food item description, Pay to the Order of line (for vendor stamp imprint) and the signature / countersignature lines.
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## **E.2. Computer Food Instrument Supply Issued to the Clinic**

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### **Food Instrument Issuance**

1. The State Agency determines the amount of food instrument stock each clinic needs to maintain an appropriate supply. Determination will be made when additional food instrument stock will need to be sent to each clinic printing food instruments. The State Agency will then send the necessary food instrument stock to the clinic. With each shipment of food instrument stock, an Acknowledgment Form will be enclosed. This form serves as acknowledgment of receipt of the food instrument stock sent to the clinic.
  2. A Health Department staff member or a clinic staff member, who does not issue WIC food instruments, should examine the contents to make sure the numbers correspond to those listed on the box and/or Acknowledgment Form. The individual signs the form if all food instruments are present. The Acknowledgment Form is returned to the State Agency for audit purposes. If any of the food instruments cannot be accounted for, the individual will document the food instrument numbers or series of food instruments missing on the Acknowledgment Form, and immediately contact the State WIC Office.
  3. Make sure that the individual who signs for the food instruments is NOT the same person who issues WIC food instruments. A WIC clinic staff member who is receiving WIC benefits cannot be issuing WIC food instruments within the same WIC clinic.
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### E.3. Loading/Unloading Food Instrument Stock

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**Utilizing Food  
Instrument  
Stock**

1. Once the clinic has determined that the food instrument stock sent from the State Agency is accurate, the clinic will input the range of numbers in screen WICPS515. The clinic needs to ensure that they are entering the correct box of food instruments assigned to that clinic number.
  2. Each day prior to the issuance of food instruments, the clinic needs to enter the sequence numbers of the food instrument stock that will be used for each printer. The first time the clinic enters screens WICPS301 and/or WICPS303, a message box will appear asking for the range of food instrument numbers that will be used. At the end of the day unload the printer and return the food instruments back to the supervisor and/or the doubled locked secured area. When beginning the next day, the clinic needs to load the printer with the next food instrument sequence number that the clinic ended with the previous vouchering day. It is not recommended to begin a new printer sequence and produce a gap unless the clinic needs to open a new box.
  3. When loading food instrument stock for more than one printer, it is recommended but not required, that the local agency assign one box of food instruments to each different printer. The staff member loading and unloading the food instrument stock is responsible to ensure the same box is assigned to the same printers the following WIC day.
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### E.4. Food Instrument Receipts/(Tear-off Stubs)

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**Documenting  
Food  
Instrument  
Receipts**

1. Food instrument receipts (tear-off stubs) are to be completed with black or blue ink as outlined below:
    - A. Since Food Instrument receipts provide a required audit trail for WIC Food Instrument issuance and reconciliation, the clinic must ensure that all receipts are removed from the food instrument prior to issuance;
    - B. All receipts MUST contain either a signature of the WIC client on the first and last receipts of the family issuance or a VOID.
    - C. All the receipts MUST be kept in numerical order (this is important if the clinic has to look up the status of the food instrument or if a re-sequence is needed);
    - D. At the end of the day, all receipts can be combined from different printers. The combined receipts MUST be kept in numerical order for that day. The total food instrument receipts will be bound in numerical order and labeled with the name or number of the clinic and the date of issuance. Each day's receipts are stored in a dated box or envelope. The container will be labeled by federal fiscal year.
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## E.5. Voucher Issuance

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**Food  
instrument  
Issuance  
Procedures**

1. Computer food instrument issuance
  - A. Clinics are not authorized to print food instruments prior to the WIC participant arriving at the clinic. Food instruments are issued only when the WIC client is present in the clinic.
  - B. After printing and before issuing the food instruments to the participant, the clinic **MUST** insure that the red and black numbers match. **DO NOT** issue food instruments when the red/black numbers do not match. Contact the Help Desk for instructions.
  - C. After checking the sequence numbers, the food instruments should be folded together and the food instrument receipt(s) (stub) torn off on the left hand side of the food instrument(s);
  - D. The WIC client must place their signature (not initials) on the first and last food instrument receipts (stubs) of the series being issued in the presence of a clinic staff member. The clinic will obtain original participant signatures. If a participant signature is missed, the clinic will write "ISSUED" on the first and last food instrument of the series of issuance. This procedure is not an alternative nor in lieu of obtaining the original client's signature. This notation is **ONLY** used if the original signature was not obtained. After the signatures are obtained, the entire family issuance should be folded and stapled together and placed on a spindle or holder;
  - E. The WIC client must sign the top signature "X" line of **ALL** food instruments being issued in the presence of a clinic staff member. Remember to instruct the client that the person who signs the food instruments at the clinic **MUST** be the person who will cash the food instrument;
  - F. The WIC client must be instructed that the time in which the food instruments can be redeemed is between the "First Day to Use" and the "Last Day to Use". Most clients will be receiving two months of food instruments, therefore, the clinic needs to reinforce the fact that food instruments cannot be cashed prior to the "First Day to Use";

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## E.5. Voucher Issuance, Continued

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- G. The clinic should verify that the participant ID number appears next to the name on the front of the ID card. Each participant of the family will have a unique Participant ID number. The food instruments should be placed in the ID/voucher Packet according to the month of issuance. Food Instruments to be cashed in the second month of issuance should be stapled together in the voucher Packet as a safeguard against the participant cashing them early.
  - H. The clinic may issue one or two months of food instruments depending on the nutrition risk as determined by the Nutritionist.
2. Voucher Issuance with Electrical or Computer Problems
- A. If the computers are not operational at the time of issuance, the clinic should implement the following actions as required:
    - 1) If the computer equipment is operational, but there is no power, the clinic will follow the procedures for the mailing of food instruments to the participants who could not receive food instruments during this period of power outage. The food instruments for these participants will be produced as soon as possible and mailed to each participant.
    - 2) If the computer equipment has failed in any way, the clinic must immediately notify the State WIC office so that replacement equipment can be issued to the clinic. The clinic will follow the procedures for the mailing of food instruments to the participants who could not receive food instruments during this period of equipment failure. The food instruments for these participants will be produced as soon as the replacement equipment is operational and mailed to each participant.
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## E.6. Safeguarding Food instrument Stock & Backup Tapes

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### **Food instrument stock and Back- up tape Storage**

- 1. The safeguarding of unissued food instruments at the local clinic is essential. Because of the potential \$95.00 value of each food instrument, it is important that effective security measures be observed. All WIC food instruments must be secured under a double locking system. (For example, a locked cabinet behind a locked door) Each WIC food instrument and food instrument receipt (stub) must be accounted for.
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## E.6. Safeguarding Food instrument Stock & Backup Tapes, (Continued)

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2. Within the clinic setting, the clinic supervisor needs to arrange for adequate security of the food instruments being given to personnel at the beginning of each day, food instrument stock that is loaded into the printer, and food instruments being removed from the printer and stored for the next WIC day usage. At all exchange of food instruments between the double locked area going to and from the printers, the supervisor must ensure that the sequence numbers match regarding the number of food instruments being issued to the clinic staff, **the number of food instruments printed**, and the number of food instruments being returned at the end of day.
  3. STOLEN food instruments are those food instruments that are missing, lost or stolen PRIOR to being printed by the computer for issuance. If food instruments are STOLEN from the clinic, immediately contact the State Agency for further directions. If the clinic can determine the range of food instrument numbers STOLEN, report this to the State Agency when calling.
  4. The backup tapes need to be stored in a secure place away from the clinic building (off site). It is advisable that the most current backup tape be kept off site and in a totally separate building if possible.
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## E.7. Redemption

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### Redemption Procedures

1. After the issuance, the participant takes the food instrument to a Utah WIC authorized vendor chosen from the list the clinic has, where the cashier:

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| ● Ensures the redemption date is within the FIRST DAY TO USE and the LAST DAY TO USE box. (food instruments presented prior to the FIRST DAY TO USE and after the LAST DAY TO USE will not be accepted). |
| ● Verifies the food items selected against the food issuance on the front of the food instrument   |
| ● Requests to see the WIC I.D. Card/Voucher Packet   |
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## **E.7. Redemption , Continued**

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| • Writes in the actual purchase price (not going over the "NOT TO EXCEED" limit printed on the food instrument) |
| • Witnesses the client's countersignature making sure both signatures match                                     |
| • Stamps the vendor number on the "Pay to the Order of" Line  |
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## **E.8. Food instruments Exceeding Dollar Limit & Retailers with a Shortage of WIC Food Commodities**

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**Food  
instruments  
over the Not to  
Exceed Limit**

1. Retailers have been instructed not to accept any food instrument which goes over the NTE (NOT TO EXCEED) limit stated on the WIC food instrument. The food instrument will be politely given back to the participant who should be instructed to return to the clinic of issuance to have the original food instrument voided and the mistake in vouchering corrected.

**Food Stockage  
problems at  
vendors**

2. In the case of the retailer not having all the prescribed WIC foods, the participant may either wait until that specific vendor has enough stock to redeem the food instrument or go to another WIC approved vendor.
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## **E.9. Voiding A WIC Food Instrument**

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**Voiding  
Procedures**

1. There are several types of problems for which a food instrument may need to be voided: torn or unusable food instrument stock that has not been issued or printed; food instruments that are rendered unusable because of printer problems; food instruments that are torn incorrectly during removal from the printer; food instruments with incorrect food packages; food instruments that have been redeemed but the food item (usually infant formula) cannot be utilized by the WIC participant; and food instruments that are reported LOST by the participant. Alignment food instruments are automatically voided.
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## E.9. Voiding A WIC Food Instrument, Continued

### Voiding Procedures

- A. If the food instrument becomes torn or otherwise unusable prior to printing (non-issuance), the clinic will void the food instrument by entering a "H" (in-hand) in the void reason column with an "N" in the reissue column. The printer sequence will have to be readjusted as the range of food instruments have been designated during the printer setup sequence. Separate the receipt from the food instrument and mark VOID on the FOOD INSTRUMENT and RECEIPT. Place the voided receipt on the spindle where the printer is located, keeping the voided receipt in numerical sequence with any issued food instruments. The voided food instrument must be sent to the State office within ten (10) days.
- B. If a food instrument becomes unusable because of printing problems or is torn during removal from the printer, the clinic will inquire on the issued food instrument, select the food instruments to be voided, void the food instrument with a "H" in the void reason column and place a "Y" in the reissue column. The computer will automatically reissue and print the appropriate replacement food instrument based on the food package assigned. Place the voided receipt on the spindle where the printer is located, keeping the voided receipt in numerical sequence with any issued food instruments. The voided food instrument should be sent to the State office within ten (10) days.
- C. If food instruments are issued but not redeemed with an incorrect food package, the clinic will need to correct the food package number prior to void and reissuance. After making the food package change, inquire on the issued food instrument, void the food instrument with a "H" in the void reason column and place a "Y" in the reissue column. The clinic can only use "H" (in-hand) when the clinic has the physical food instrument. The computer will automatically reissue and print the appropriate replacement food instrument based on the food package assigned. Place the voided receipt(s) on the spindle where the printer is located, keeping the voided receipt(s) in numerical sequence with any issued food instruments. The voided food instrument must be sent to the State office within ten (10) days.
- D. If a food instrument is redeemed and the participant cannot utilize the food items (usually an intolerance or a change in infant formula), the clinic needs to instruct the client to return any unused formula to the clinic. Change the food package number to the new issuance. Inquire on the food instruments issued and void the food instrument(s) with a "U" (USED) in the reason column. Place a "Y" in the reissue column and the replacement food instrument(s) with the corrected food package will be printed. The voided food instrument must be sent to the State office within ten (10) days. The clinic must document in the Screen 108 of the UWIN System the nutritional/administrative reason(s) why the food package was changed, the number of food items that was purchased with the "USED" food instrument, and whether any over-issuance took place with the new food package issuance.



## E.9. Voiding A WIC Food Instrument, Continued

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### Voiding Procedures

- D. If a food instrument is reported LOST by the WIC client, inquire on the food instruments issued, contact the Help Desk to verify the food instruments have not been redeemed, and void the food instrument(s) with a "L" (LOST) in the reason column. Place a "Y" in the reissue column and the replacement food instrument(s) with the appropriate food package will be printed. The clinic must document in Comment Section (Screen 108 of the UWIN System) if the lost food instrument(s) in question could be specifically identified as lost. The documentation must include whether the food instrument(s) were actually identified or could not be identified as the lost food instrument(s). If the lost food instrument(s) are redeemed and the specific lost food instrument(s) were identified, then participant abuse procedures need to be implemented. If the clinic cannot specifically identify the lost food instrument(s), then no alleged participant abuse can be issued and a form should not be completed.
2. The clinic needs to ensure that the food instrument is being voided for the correct reason. Only use the "H" code if the clinic actually has the food instrument "in-hand". A food instrument with an "H" code cannot be redeemed by the vendor. Use the "U" code only when reissuing food instruments that have been redeemed and the WIC participant cannot utilize the food items. Use the "L" code only when reporting a lost food instrument.
  3. When reissuing food instrument(s) that were lost, the clinic will need to determine through whatever investigative measures are necessary, the specific food instruments that were lost. Replace on a one for one basis only. Issue one food instrument for one food instrument voided. food instruments must be voided before reissuance.
  4. When voiding food instruments, the clinic needs to be aware that if a "N" is placed in the reissuance column, the clinic cannot at a later date go back and change that column designation or reissue that food instrument.
  5. The clinic needs to ensure that all unusable food instrument stock is voided appropriately.
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## E.10. Unreconciled Food instruments/Gaps in Food Instrument Numbers

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### Food instrument Designations

1. The clinic needs to ensure that all food instruments assigned to the clinic are reconciled. food instruments **MUST** have one of these designations:
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## **E.10. Unreconciled Food instruments/Gaps in Food Instrument Numbers, Continued**

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● assigned to the clinic, not issued	● voided "H" (in-hand), not issued	● voided as "U" (used), issued and redeemed
● voided as "L" (lost), issued	● voided as "S" (stolen), not issued	● issued, not redeemed
● issued, stale dated and therefore voided	● issued and redeemed	

### **Gaps in Food instrument Numbers**

- 2. If the clinic has a gap in the food instrument number sequence on screen WICPR113 which is not a result of changing paper in the printers or a void code, the clinic must investigate the reason why the gap occurred in order to reconcile the food instrument(s) involved. All food instrument numbers in gap sequence will need to be voided or otherwise reconciled with the Help Desk.
  3. Any food instruments between issuance and ninety (90) days from the First Day to Use that are returned to the clinic which will not be redeemed by the WIC client, must be voided on the UWIN system. After voiding on the system, the food instrument will be returned to the State Agency within ten (10) days. The clinic need not spend time researching the receipt/stub to mark it as VOID as long as the food instrument is voided on the system.
  4. Food instruments greater than ninety (90) days from the first day to use need not be voided on the UWIN system, but still must be returned to the State Agency.
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## E.11. Issuance Procedure For Infant Formula Returned To The Local Clinics.

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**Issued &  
Returned  
Infant Formula**

1. Infant formula purchased by WIC participants with WIC food moneys that cannot be utilized by the participant must be returned to the local clinic of issuance.
  2. The clinic receiving the infant formula will use the **RETURNED INFANT FORMULA LOG**. Document the date received, Participant Name, Participant number, number of cans returned, type of infant formula, and the clinic personnel signature receiving the formula. These items are to be kept separate from any samples that the clinic may have received.
  3. As the clinic has need of a type or brand of infant formula, (i.e.: new participant or those requiring a change in infant formula) the clinic will issue the infant formula from the stock that has been previously returned. DO NOT give any of the returned infant formula cans to non-WIC participants.
  4. When issuing the infant formula use the **ISSUED INFANT FORMULA LOG** and document the date issued, Participant Name, Participant Number, number of cans issued, type of formula, and obtain the participant /endorser's signature acknowledging receipt.
  5. Infant formula that will be going out of date within the next 30-60 days and will not likely be issued to a WIC participant by the expiration date, may be donated to a non-profit organization. The clinic will need to obtain a receipt for the food items which will need to be kept with the Issuance log.
  6. The State WIC office should be contacted when any special formula is returned to the clinic. This will allow the reallocation of the special formula to other clinics where there may be a need.
  7. Out of date infant formula should be destroyed and noted on the **RETURNED INFANT FORMULA LOG** as "DESTROYED: OUT OF DATE" with a clinic personnel signature.
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## E.12. Special Situations and Instructions

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### **Mailing Food instruments on an Agency Wide basis**

1. Mailing Of Food instruments On An Agency-Wide Basis
  - A. Federal Regulations allow for the mailing of food instruments to participants on an individual basis for approved reasons.
  - B. Federal Regulations also provide that food instruments may be mailed to participants on a local agency-wide basis if first approved by the State agency. Local agencies should utilize the mailing of food instruments on an agency-wide and/or individual basis only when circumstances would otherwise prohibit participants from picking up their food instruments.
    - 1) **THE STATE WIC OFFICE MUST BE CONTACTED FOR PRIOR APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENTING THE MAILING OF FOOD INSTRUMENTS ON AN AGENCY-WIDE BASIS.**

### **Procedures for mailing food instruments on an Agency Wide basis**

2. Procedures for mailing food instruments on an agency-wide basis are as follows:
  - A. Written approval from the Utah State WIC Office must be received before a local agency implements the mailing of WIC food instruments on an agency-wide basis.
  - B. When mailing on a agency-wide basis, not more than three month's worth of food instruments may be mailed to each participant during a six month certification period. Pregnant women may receive mailed food instruments at a rate of one month per quarter (3 months) with the option of mailing a third month's worth during a six month period. The local agency should inform the State office concerning which months during the certification period that food instruments will be mailed.
  - C. (Remember that the 2nd vouchersing appointment is often valuable to participants for the purpose of asking clinic personnel pertinent questions about the food package and redeeming food instruments).
  - D. Agency-wide mailings can be done for only one month at a time. Schedule the participants for a nutrition education class/food instrument pickup for the following month.
  - E. If a local agency chooses to mail food instruments during the 6th month of the certification period, participants must be informed in writing with the mailing, prior to the next appointment of the following information:

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## E.12. Special Situations and Instructions, Continued

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**Procedures for  
mailing food  
instruments on  
an Agency  
Wide basis**

- 1) The date their certification period expires;
- 2) That unless they are recertified, they will not receive more food instruments;
- 3) The date and time of their certification appointment(s) for the following month, including which family members must be brought into the clinic;
- 4) Any participant whose categorical eligibility has expired must be notified of the date of their ineligibility (these participants include children who become five years old, women six months postpartum who are not breastfeeding, women between six to twelve months after delivery who discontinue breastfeeding).
  - a) Please refer to section G of the WIC policies and procedures manual for notification requirements concerning expiring certification and ineligibility.
- 5) Documentation must be made in each individual WIC file to indicate the date and reason that food instruments are mailed.
- 6) Participants or parent/guardians should address their own envelopes during the previous month's visit. These pre-addressed envelopes should be maintained in the participants file until the "mailing month". The envelopes cannot contain a return address with "WIC" printed on them, but may contain a Health Dept. name. Participants should also be informed of their responsibility to notify the clinic if the mailed food instruments are lost/stolen (clinic to follow lost/stolen procedures) or if they change addresses.
- 7) The "FIRST DAY TO USE" recorded on the mailed food instruments should be recorded as the date the food instruments are mailed. These food instruments are then valid until the "LAST DAY TO USE" printed on the front.
- 8) The food instrument receipt is removed from each food instrument and documented with the designation "MAILED" with the date mailed and the signature of the clinic personnel mailing the food instruments.
- 9) Clinics should indicate "DO NOT FORWARD" on the envelopes containing WIC food instruments.
- 10) All WIC food instruments must be mailed by Certified Mail. The clinic will receive a **RETURN RECEIPT** as acknowledgment that the food instruments were received. The **RETURN RECEIPT** should be kept in the participant's chart for documentation.

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## **E.12. Special Situations and Instructions, Continued**

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- 11) If these food instruments are not deliverable as addressed, they will be returned to the appropriate clinic. The clinic should then file these envelopes in alphabetical order and VOID them if not picked up by the end of the month.
- 12) Participants who do not receive their food instruments at the expected time of the month should call the WIC clinic to make arrangements to pick up the returned food instruments.
- 13) The local agency may elect not to mail food instruments to those participants defined by the agency as, "High Risk". The State WIC Office should be advised of this local agency decision.
- 14) The local agency must assure the State WIC Office that nutrition education and appropriate health services are provided to participants during the months that food instruments are mailed. The provision of these services must be documented in the participants files.
- 15) Each clinic should encourage participants to call during clinic hours if they have questions concerning how to use their food instruments. WIC clinics should have a knowledgeable staff member available to answer any questions.

### **Mailing Food instruments on an Individual basis**

3. **MAILING OF FOOD INSTRUMENTS SHALL BE PERMITTED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS FOR ONLY THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**
  - A. When individual participants and/or proxies encounter difficulties in personally obtaining food instruments:

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## **E.12. Special Situations and Instructions, Continued**

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Illness</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Imminent childbirth: if the current month coincides with the woman's EDD (expected date of delivery)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Inclement weather conditions: this will be in the competent professional authorities' judgment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Distance to travel: this applies to rural areas where persons in need would be otherwise unable to regularly participate in the Program due to distance, unimproved roads, or seasonal inclement weather conditions</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● High cost of travel: if the distance from the participant's residence to the WIC clinic is more than 25 miles away, one way</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Inability to get to the WIC clinic during business hours. Participants should be highly encouraged to make every effort to obtain their food instruments in person from the clinic during normal business or extend hours. Appointments are made in advance, therefore clients or their proxies have time to arrange for a mutually agreeable time to pick up the food instruments in person. The competent professional authority will be responsible for the decision regarding this circumstance</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Clinic Equipment Failure: (Computer/printer/electrical malfunction that interferes with the normal production or issuance of food instruments at the clinic site)</li></ul>	

- B. When a participant requests that food instruments be mailed due to an emergency, issue only that month's food instruments. Schedule the participant for a nutrition education class/food instrument pickup for the following month.

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## E.12. Special Situations and Instructions, Continued

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### Mailing Food instruments on an Individual basis

- C. **No more than three month's worth of food instruments will be mailed to any participant during a certification period.** (regardless of monthly or bimonthly food instrument issuance). When a participant requests that food instruments be mailed due to an emergency, issue only that month's food instruments. Schedule the participant for a nutrition education class/food instrument pickup for the following month. food instruments can only be mailed for three months of the certification period. This is to help people that have difficulties getting in due to an emergency. The Bimonthly food instrument issuance schedule may need to be altered for the "emergency", but the client should still be coming to the clinic three times per certification for nutrition classes/food instruments pickup.
- D. **WHENEVER FOOD INSTRUMENTS ARE MAILED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS THE FOLLOWING POINTS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION:**
- 1) Whenever possible, proxy signatures should be obtained by those participants who anticipate difficulty in personally obtaining food instruments during a certification period.
  - 2) The reason for mailing WIC food instruments must be documented by the local agency in the Comment Section of the UWIN system(screen 108).
  - 3) The mailing of food instruments to participants will be discontinued if the participant's initial hardship is resolved.
  - 4) The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture recommends that, wherever feasible, participants personally obtain their food instruments from the WIC clinic to ensure that nutrition education and health services are integrated and are frequently available to participants.
  - 5) A system must be established by each local agency to help ensure that potential abuse is avoided concerning the mailing of food instruments (e.g., what will be done to ensure that authorized persons are signing WIC food instruments).
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## E.13. WIC Voucher Packet/Identification (I.D.) Card

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### WIC Voucher Packet/ID Cards

#### 1. WIC VOUCHER PACKET/I.D. CARDS

**A. Description:** The WIC Voucher Packet/Identification card is an integral part of the food delivery system. The Voucher Packet/I.D. card **MUST** be presented by the participant:

- 1) At each appointment to receive food instruments, however, the clinic should not withhold benefits, and
- 2) At time of redemption to validate the transaction.

### Completing the Voucher Packet/ID Card

#### B. Completing The Voucher Packet/ID Card

- 1) Issue one Voucher Packet/I.D. card per family.
- 2) The front of the Voucher Packet/I.D. card should be completed in the following manner:
  - a) Print the name of the endorser on the appropriate line.
  - b) Print each participant's name and participant's ID number on the card.
  - c) Have the endorser sign the signature line. A proxy may also sign the card, allowing a different person to pick up the food instruments and then shop with them.
- 3) The center of the Voucher Packet/I.D. Card should be completed in the following manner:
  - a) Print or stamp the name of the clinic in the appropriate space,
  - b) Print or stamp the clinic's address in the appropriate space,
  - c) Print or stamp the clinic's phone number in the appropriate space.
- 4) The appointment entry of the Voucher Packet/I.D. card should be completed in the following manner:
- 5) Print the date and time of the client's next scheduled appointment in the appropriate space.

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## **E.13. WIC Voucher Packet/Identification (I.D.) Card**, Continued

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### **Card Supply**

#### **C. Card Supply**

- 1) Upon request, the State will distribute Voucher Packet/I.D. cards, to each clinic site. Card requests should be on the Clinic Supplies Order Form and addressed to the State WIC Accounting Clerk.

### **Safeguarding WIC Cards**

#### **D. Safeguarding WIC Cards**

- 1) It is important to carefully store and safeguard the unissued Voucher Packet/I.D. cards. Because the I.D. card validate the retailer's WIC transaction, the Voucher Packet/I.D. cards have potential value. Make sure that the Voucher Packet/ID Cards are locked in a secure storage facility.

### **Food instrument Issuance to High Risk Clients**

#### **E. Food instrument Issuance to High Risk Clients**

- 1) WIC food instruments may be issued on a monthly basis for WIC clients that are determined to be at High Risk by the CPA. It is also advisable to issue WIC food instruments monthly for other clients that are scheduled for monthly (or more frequent) follow up care.
  - 2) The CPA must document in the participant's file that the client is receiving food instruments for one month due to the participant's need for frequent follow up care (as opposed to bimonthly).
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## **E.14. Lost WIC Food instrument(s) & Voucher Packet/I.D. Card**

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### **Lost Voucher/ID Packets**

1. When a participant notifies the WIC clinic that their WIC food instruments and/or Voucher Packet/I.D. Card has been misplaced, lost, or stolen, take the following steps:
    - A. If this is the FIRST incident of lost food instruments or a Voucher Packet/ID Card during a CERTIFICATION period, the clinic will inform the participant that there will be a waiting period of seven (7) calendar days before replacement food instrument(s) or Voucher Packet/I.D. Card. The clinic will make a Priority I comment in screen 108 regarding the date the participant reported the loss and requested replacement.
    - B. The participant/guardian should be instructed to search for the lost item during the waiting period.
    - C. If the clinic is not open during the time the seven (7) calendar day waiting period is completed, the clinic may mail the food instruments to the participant by certified mail.
    - D. If the participant reports a second incident of lost food instruments during the same CERTIFICATION period, the clinic will NOT replace any of these food instruments. The ID/Voucher Packet can be replaced after an additional seven (7) day waiting period.
    - E. The WIC participant must bring in proof of identity when requesting a replacement Voucher Packet/I.D. Card. The Voucher Packet I.D. Card must be presented when replacing food instruments.
    - F. If the UWIN system prorates the food instruments because of the waiting period, an over-ride is not authorized solely based on the lost food instrument waiting period.
    - G. **DISCUSS WITH THE PARTICIPANT/GUARDIAN/PROXY THE NECESSITY OF SAFEGUARDING THE FOOD INSTRUMENTS.**
    - H. Replacing WIC food benefits that are lost in personal misfortune (as defined in §E. 15) will be considered an exception to the waiting period.
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## **E.15. Replacing WIC Food Benefits that are Redeemed but Lost in Personal Misfortune**

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### **Replacing Food Benefits lost in Personal Misfortune**

1. In isolated personal misfortune incidents where one or a few households might be effected by some destructive incident such as a gas line explosion, water main break, or a house fire, the clinic may reissue WIC food instruments to cover the food items lost in these circumstances.
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## **E.15. Replacing WIC Food Benefits that are Redeemed but Lost in Personal Misfortune (Continued)**

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### **Replacing Food Benefits lost in Personal Misfortune**

- A. The clinic must document exactly the amount and type of WIC food items were destroyed/lost in screen 108. The clinic may then reissue food instruments up to the amount of the loss without a waiting period. Replacement food instruments can only be reissued within the appropriate time-frame of the monthly issuance.
  - B. This does not apply to mass disasters where emergency feeding services are typically available.
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## **E.16. State Agency Reconciliation of Food instruments**

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### **Reconciliation of Food instruments**

1. The State Agency currently utilizes an in-house computer system consisting of clinic based issuance of food instruments by PCs with modem capabilities to the state mainframe. Reconciliation is accomplished through daily upload/download of participant and food instrument issuance information which is forwarded to the bank. The bank screens the food instrument for the required redemption criteria and verifies that the food instrument issuance record is present.

### **Voided Food instruments**

#### **2. VOIDED FOOD INSTRUMENTS**

- A. A situation may occur in which the Endorser/Participant fail to redeem food instruments at an authorized vendor for unknown reasons. In these cases, a record of issuance may remain outstanding for a period of ninety (90) days from the First Day to Use date. After the ninety (90) days has expired from the First Day to Use, the food instrument will be considered stale-dated and need not be voided on the system. The bank will also screen for stale-dated food instruments and reject them without payment.
  - B. If the WIC client reports the food instrument as lost, then the clinic will void the food instrument using a code "L". If the clinic has difficulty determining from the WIC client which food instruments may have been redeemed, the clinic should contact the help desk to determine redemption status.
    - 1) If the food instruments have not been redeemed, the clinic may reissue only those food instruments reported lost. These food instruments will reflect this void code and allow reissuance of additional food instruments to cover the lost food instrument(s).
    - 2) If the food instruments have been redeemed, no food instruments may be reissued until the State Agency investigates the redemption.
    - 3) The system will identify for the State Agency any food instruments that have been redeemed with a code "L". The redeemed lost food instrument must be investigated by the Local Agency for possible participant abuse.
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## E.16. State Agency Reconciliation of Food instruments, (Continued)

- C. The clinic may void a food instrument with a “H” code (in-hand) which means the clinic personnel physically has the food instrument. Once posted to the system, this food instrument cannot be redeemed and will be rejected.
- D. The clinic may void a food instrument with a “U” code (used) which means the clinic has issued a different food package because the initial food package could not be utilized. The food instrument designated as a “U” will have been redeemed. The State Agency will monitor the clinic documentation to ensure that inappropriate over-issuance has not occurred.
- E. The clinic may void a food instrument as “S” (stolen) which means that the food instrument(s) were lost or stolen prior to issuance at the clinic. Once designated on the system, these food instruments cannot be redeemed and will be rejected by the bank.
- F. The State Agency has the option to request a “stop payment” on any food instrument if deemed necessary. This food instrument cannot be redeemed and will be rejected by the bank.
- G. The State Agency has the ability to examine the status of any voided food instrument through access with the mainframe

### Redeemed Food instruments

#### 3. REDEMPTIONS

- A. An issuance record from each clinic is uploaded to the mainframe each night. The issuance record is forwarded to the bank who will match each food instrument against the clinic issuance record when the food instrument is presented for payment.
- B. Food instruments forwarded by retailers are drawn against the WIC account, and information containing redemption transactions are produced and forwarded to the State Agency mainframe. This information is posted as redeemed food instrument transactions.
- C. In the event that the issuance record does not match the redemption record, the State Agency will be contacted regarding resolution of appropriate issuance records.

### Monitoring Redeemed Food instruments

#### 4. MONITORING REDEEMED FOOD INSTRUMENTS

- A. Four hundred redeemed food instruments will be reviewed once a month for all required parameters. Errors which are identified will be individually investigated and appropriate follow-up action will be taken with the vendor as appropriate. Food instruments will be reviewed by the State Agency for the following:

● Purchase price missing	● Participant's signature missing/does not match	● Vendor ID stamp imprint missing or unreadable	● Redemption outside valid date
● Altered price	● Altered food items or quantities	● Altered or missing issue dates	● Missing or illegible redemption date stamp

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## E.16. State Agency Reconciliation of Food instruments, (Continued)

- B. The State Agency ensures that the bank will screen each food instrument and reject it for the following reasons:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missing, illegible, invalid or unauthorized vendor stamp</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Countersignature missing or non-matching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to the First Day to Use or greater than 60 days from the Last Day to Use</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over the NOT TO EXCEED limit or exceeds the maximum account limit of \$95.00</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Altered Issue Date or dollar amount</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missing or illegible redemption date stamp</li> </ul>

### Food instrument Reconciliation

#### 5. FOOD INSTRUMENT RECONCILIATION

- A. Information containing assignment, issuance, and void transactions are forwarded along with the redeemed food instruments from the bank for entry into the UWIN mainframe. In this manner, one-to-one reconciliation is accomplished for every food instrument.
- B. In the event a food instrument has been issued but not redeemed by the vendor within ninety (90) days from the Issue Date, the food instrument is designated by the UWIN system as expired and rejected by the bank if redemption is attempted. Any reconciliation may be verified through the UWIN system regarding the expired status.
- C. The UWIN system will allow an over-issuance when using the “U” (used) and “L” (lost) codes. The mainframe will identify when an over-issuance has occurred and when food instruments identified as lost are redeemed. When the clinic utilizes a “U” code, documentation must be made in screen 108 of the UWIN System. Lost food instruments that have been redeemed, will be sent to the clinic in order to determine if participant abuse has occurred. These food instrument discrepancies will be monitored at the clinic’s management evaluation visit.

### Check Exception Report

#### 6. ISSUED AND REDEEMED CHECK EXCEPTION REPORT

- A. This State Agency report identifies food instruments that are voided with a “L” or “U” code and have been redeemed.
- B. A photocopy of the redeemed voucher with a cover letter will be sent to the clinic asking for investigation.

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## E.16. State Agency Reconciliation of Food instruments,

Continued

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**Check  
Exception  
Report**

- C. If the food instrument was voided as a “U” and redeemed, the clinic will examine the original documentation to ensure the additional issuance is appropriate. If no documentation exists, the clinic must document in the UWIN Comment Section why the food instrument was voided with a “U” code and justify why a different food package was issued.
  - D. If the food instrument was voided with a “L” code, the clinic will initiate participant abuse procedures in accordance with Section G, WIC PARTICIPANT ABUSE. The participant has redeemed a food instrument that has been reported as lost but has been redeemed. The explanation of the redemption must also be documented in the UWIN Comment Section.
  - E. The other part of this report identifies food instruments that have been redeemed at greater than 110% of the estimated cost. Because the bank has been instructed to reject all food instruments redeemed at greater than 110% of the estimated cost, this information will only occur if the bank has made an error and failed to reject the check, or the State Agency has allowed the food instrument to be redeemed above 100% because of pricing changes or other verifiable data.
  - F. The State Agency will examine this portion of the report to determine if the bank is in error if the amount has been overridden by the State Agency. If the vendor owes the State Agency a reimbursement, the State WIC Program will request the difference in payment from the vendor. If the State Agency has overridden the amount, documentation will be provided as to the reason for accepting the amount greater than 110%.
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